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COMM 8100- Theories of the Public (86792)

Fall, 2006

7:15-9:45 Th, 1020 1 PPS

Vital Information:

Professor: Dr. James Darsey

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or by appt

Course introduction & goals

At the heart of mass and speech communication scholarship is the idea of a public audience, configured to receive and respond to messages, and doing its work in the glare of social interaction and accountability. Over the last hundred years of communication inquiry, the nature and functioning of these audiences, in all their manifestations from small group decision making bodies to representative political institutions to the reading publics who attend to journalistic coverage to the inchoate mass mob, has been an underlying theoretical problematic for those seeking to understand the dynamics of persuasion, public controversy, mass communication, journalism, and the professional arts of public relations and speechmaking.

Yet for all this attention, we might still reliably consider the “public” a fiction, never stable or available for comprehensive examination, always changing and fickle even despite a stable undercurrent of core beliefs, called into being by speakers and other public figures who desire the legitimate authority that follows from rightfully speaking on its behalf.

The purpose of this seminar is to explore the major theoretical debates in our field that have centered on the idea of the “public,” and now on “counter-publics.” From the earliest American debates over the American public’s competency to make fundamental life and death decisions (as enunciated in the work of John Dewey and Walter Lippmann) to the more contemporary scenes of public opinion theory, mass communication theory, and critical theories, we will take a look at how scholars have tried to make sense of the contemporary mass audience and its basic functioning in democratic societies. In doing so we will be taking up some of the central and most pressing issues of our age: Can the public be trusted to make decisions in an age of hyper-specialization? Can we imagine and produce a learned and reasonable public without also marginalizing and silencing the outcasts of our culture? Is deliberation an attainable goal or a mere phantom or myth? And how is the potential for real deliberation being transformed by new structures and technologies of communication?

Texts

There are seven required texts for this course, a supplemental course packet, and one (highly) recommended text. The texts are available at Park Place Bookstore. The course packet is available on EReserve. Access information available on the course WebCT site.

Please, when making copies of articles from EReserve, it costs the department 7¢/page to make a laser print and only about 3¢/page to make a photocopy. Either keep your readings as pdf files only, or try to combine efforts so that everyone is not printing an original laser copy. You are saving the cost of a course packet by having the materials on EReserve. Extra money spent from the departmental printing budget will come from somewhere, most likely graduate student travel funds.

The texts are:

Required texts:

Craig Calhoun, ed, *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, MIT Press, Paper

John Dewey, *The Public & Its Problems*, Swallow, Paper

Jürgen Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, MIT Press, Paper

John Hartley, *The Politics of Pictures: The Creation of the Public in the Age of Popular Media*, Routledge, Paper

Leon Mayhew, et al., *The New Public*, Cambridge, Paper

Roberts & Crossley, eds., *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, Blackwell, paper

Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, Zone Books

Recommended text:

Diane Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual*, 4th edition, St Martins

Class Readings / Schedule

PART I The History of the “Public”

Date	Topic	Readings (EReserve readings in brown; online readings in blue; readings from texts in black)
08/24	Introduction to the Class -- Why Does the Public Matter? Historicizing the Public	Jeff Weintraub, "The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinction," in <i>Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy</i> , edited by Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1997), 1-42. Richard Sennett, <i>The Fall of Public Man</i> (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), 3-27. Michael Schudson, "Colonial Origins of American Political Practice: 1690-1787," in <i>The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life</i> (New York: Free Press, 1998), 11-47. Michael Schudson, "Was There Ever a Public Sphere? If So, When? Reflections on the American Case," in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i> , edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 143-163. Robert Asen, "A Discourse Theory of Citizenship," <i>Quarterly Journal of Speech</i> , 90 (2004), 189-211.
08/31	John Dewey's Public	John Dewey, <i>The Public and Its Problems</i> ,
09/07		Lloyd Bitzer, "Rhetoric and Public Knowledge," in Don M. Burks, ed., <i>Rhetoric, Philosophy, and Literature: An Exploration</i> (W Lafayette, IN: Purdue Univ Press, 1978), 67-93. William Caspary, "Public Ethical Deliberation and Ethical Theory," in <i>Dewey on Democracy</i> (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 2000), 140-173.
09/14	The Mass Publics of American Communication Theory	Daniel Czitrom, "Toward a New Community? Modern Communication in the Social Thought of Charles Horton Cooley, John Dewey, and Robert E. Park," in <i>Media and the American Mind From Morse to McLuhan</i> (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1982), 91-121. J. Michael Sproule, "Propaganda Analysis, Incorporated" and "The New Communication -- or Old Propaganda?," in <i>Propaganda and Democracy: The American Experience of Media and Mass Persuasion</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997), 129-177, 224-261.

Date	Topic	Readings (EReserve readings in brown; online readings in blue; readings from texts in black)
		<p>Harold Lasswell, "Nations and Classes: The Symbols of Identification" (1935), excerpted in <i>Reader in Public Opinion and Mass Communication</i> 3E, eds. Morris Janowitz and Paul Hirsch (Free Press, 1981), 17-28.</p> <p>Walter Lippmann, "Stereotypes" (1922), excerpted in <i>Reader in Public Opinion and Mass Communication</i> 3E, eds. Morris Janowitz and Paul Hirsch (Free Press, 1981), 29-37.</p> <p>Christopher Simpson, "Defining Psychological War" and "World War and Early Modern Communication Research," <i>Science of Coercion: Communication Research and Psychological Warfare: 1945-1960</i> (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), 3-30.</p>
09/21	The New Professional Publics	Leon Mayhew, <i>The New Public: Professional Communication and the Means of Social Influence</i>
09/28	The "Public Spheres" of Critical Theory - I (Hannah Arendt)	<p>Hannah Arendt, "The Public and Private Realm," in <i>The Human Condition</i>, 2E, with introduction by Margaret Canovan (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998), 22-78.</p> <p>Roberto Alejandro, "The Quest for Community and the Quest for Glory: John Dewey's and Hannah Arendt's Visions of the Public Sphere," in <i>Hermeneutics, Citizenship, and the Public Sphere</i> (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993), 165-178.</p> <p>Seyla Benhabib, "Models of Public Space: Hannah Arendt, the Liberal Tradition, and Jürgen Habermas," in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i>, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 73-98.</p>
10/04 Tuesday meeting - 835 1PPS	The "Public Spheres" of Critical Theory - II (Jürgen Habermas)	<p>Craig Calhoun, "Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere," in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i>, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 1-50</p> <p>Jürgen Habermas, <i>The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere</i> (120 pages)</p>
10/12		<p>Jürgen Habermas, <i>The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere</i> (finish)</p> <p>Jürgen Habermas, "Further Reflections on the Public Sphere," in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i>, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 421-461.</p> <p>Keith Michael Baker, "Defining the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century France: Variations on a Theme by Habermas" in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i>, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 181-211.</p>

Date	Topic	Readings (EReserve readings in brown; online readings in blue; readings from texts in black)
10/19	Responding to Habermas: The Public Sphere in a Mass Mediated Age	<p>Brian McNair, "Journalism and Democracy: The Debate," <i>Journalism and Democracy: An Evaluation of the Political Public Sphere</i> (London: Routledge, 2000), 1-13.</p> <p>Nicholas Garnham, "The Media and the Public Sphere," in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i>, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 359-376.</p> <p>Michael Warner, "The Mass Public and the Mass Subject," in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i>, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 377-401.</p> <p>Hanno Hardt, "The Making of the Public Sphere: Class, Culture, and Media Practices," in <i>Interactions: Critical Studies in Communication, Media, and Journalism</i> (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), 117-136.</p>
10/26	Responding to Habermas: Marginalized and Counterpublics	<p>Gemma Edwards, "Habermas and Social Movements: What's 'New'?" in Roberts & Crossley, eds., <i>After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere</i>, 113-130.</p> <p>Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i>, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 109-142.</p> <p>Joan Landes, "The Public and Private Sphere: A Feminist Reconsideration," in <i>Feminists Read Habermas: Gendering the Subject of Discourse</i>, edited by Johanna Meehan (New York: Routledge, 1995), 91-116.</p> <p>Houston Baker, "Critical Memory and the Black Public Sphere," in <i>The Black Public Sphere: A Public Culture Book</i>, edited by the Black Public Sphere Collective (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1995), 5-38.</p>
11/02	Responding to Habermas: Marginalized and Counterpublics	<p>Robert Asen, "Seeking the 'Counter' in Counterpublics," <i>Communication Theory</i> 10.4 (November 2000): 424-446.</p> <p>Michael Warner, <i>Publics and Counterpublics</i></p>
11/09	Rethinking Habermas: Bakhtin and Bourdieu	<p>Michael Gardiner, "Wild Publics and Grotesque Symposiums: Habermas and Bakhtin on Dialogue, Everyday Life, and the Public Sphere" in Roberts & Crossley, eds., <i>After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere</i>, 28-48.</p> <p>Ken Hirschkop, "Justice and Drama: On Bakhtin as a Complement to Habermas" in Roberts & Crossley, eds., <i>After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere</i>, 49-66.</p> <p>Nick Crossley, "On Systematically Distorted Communication: Bourdieu and the Socio-Analysis of Publics" in Roberts & Crossley, eds., <i>After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere</i>, 88-112.</p>

Date	Topic	Readings (EReserve readings in brown; online readings in blue; readings from texts in black)
11/14 Tuesday meeting - 835 1PPS	Rethinking Habermas: The Transnational or Cosmopolitan Public Sphere	<p>Geoff Eley, "Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century," in <i>Habermas and the Public Sphere</i>, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 289-339.</p> <p>James Bohmann, "Expanding Dialogue: The Internet, the Public Sphere, and Prospects for Transnational Democracy," in Roberts & Crossley, eds., <i>After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere</i>, 131-55.</p> <p>Lisa McLaughlin, "Feminism and the Political Economy of Transnational Public Space," in Roberts & Crossley, eds., <i>After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere</i>, 156-77.</p> <p>Fredric Jameson, "Notes on Globalization as a Philosophical Issue," in <i>The Cultures of Globalization</i>, eds. Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 1999), 54-77.</p> <p>James Bohman, "The Public Spheres of the World Citizen," in <i>Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal</i>, edited by James Bohman and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), 179-200.</p> <p>Marie Mater, "A Structural Transformation for a Global Public Sphere?" in <i>Counterpublics and the State</i>, eds. Robert Asen and Daniel C. Brouwer (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001), 211-234.</p>

PART II "Public" Controversies

Date	Topic	Readings (EReserve readings in brown; online readings in blue; readings from texts in black)
11/23	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving	
11/30	Measured Publics: The Rise of the Public Opinion Industry	<p>Susan Herbst, "Opinion Quantification and Democracy," <i>Numbered Voices: How Opinion Polling Has Shaped American Politics</i> (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1993), 153-175.</p> <p>Carroll Glynn et al., "Psychological and Sociological Perspectives on Public Opinion," in <i>Public Opinion</i> (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1999), 103-176.</p>

Date	Topic	Readings (EReserve readings in brown; online readings in blue; readings from texts in black)
		Hogan, J. Michael. "George Gallup and the Rhetoric of Scientific Democracy". <i>Communication Monographs</i> , 64 (1997), 161-180.
11/30 (cont)	Must Publics Deliberate?	<p>Benjamin Page, "Public Deliberation and Democracy," <i>Who Deliberates? Mass Media in Modern Democracy</i> (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1996), 1-16.</p> <p>Carroll Glynn et al., "Public Opinion and Democratic Competence," in <i>Public Opinion</i> (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1999), 249-298.</p> <p>Joshua Cohen, "Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy," in <i>Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics</i>, edited by James Bohman and William Rehg (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), 67-91.</p> <p>Thomas Christiano, "The Significance of Public Deliberation," in <i>Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics</i>, edited by James Bohman and William Rehg (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), 243-277.</p>
12/07	Must Publics be Civil?	<p>Don Eberly, "The Meanings, Origins, and Applications of Civil Society," in <i>The Essential Civil Society Reader: The Classic Essays</i>, edited by Don Eberly (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 3-29.</p> <p>Vaclav Havel, "Politics, Morality, and Civility," in <i>The Essential Civil Society Reader: The Classic Essays</i>, edited by Don Eberly (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 391-402.</p> <p>William Galston, "Individualism, Liberalism, and Democratic Civil Society," in <i>The Essential Civil Society Reader: The Classic Essays</i>, edited by Don Eberly (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 353-372</p>
12/07 (cont)		<p>Robert Pippin, "The Ethical Status of Civility," + response from Daniel Dahlstrom, in <i>Civility</i>, edited by Leroy Rounier (South Bend, Ind.: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2000), 103-125.</p> <p>Dominique Colas, "Civil Society and Fanaticism: Conjoined Histories," in <i>Civil Society and Fanaticism: Conjoined Histories</i>, trans. Amy Jacobs (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1997), 8-41.</p> <p>Allan Silver, "'Two Different Forms of Commerce' -- Friendship and Strangeness in Civil Society," in <i>Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy</i>, edited by Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1997), 43-74.</p> <p>James Darsey, "Radical Rhetoric and American Community," <i>The Prophetic Tradition and Radical Rhetoric in America</i> (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 1-12.</p>
12/14	Final Papers due: 7:15 PM	

Assignments and grading:

There are ten (10) assignments (—) in this class. The point values are as follows:

Assignment description	#	Point value ea	Total
Weekly reaction papers – 300-word (max) papers on some aspect of that week's readings. May focus on a single reading, a part of the reading, an issue raised by the reading, or the reading as a whole. These papers should not merely describe the position of the original author(s), but react thoughtfully (and perhaps critically) to the readings	10	20	200
Short paper - A paper (10 pages, max, excluding documentation) in which you may either, engage in informed debate with a theoretical position expressed in the readings OR use a theoretical position from the readings as the basis for a case study. To be completed on a week when you're not doing a reaction paper.	1	150	300
Participation - In addition to attendance, your participation points are based on these criteria: (a) quality of comment (Does the comment contribute to discussion and reflect a close reading of the text?); (b) quantity of comment (Are you contributing consistently, yet in a manner that does not monopolize conversation?); (c) participatory style (Do you show a thoughtful respect for other students and their views? Does your involvement encourage others to participate?)	1	150	150
Final paper – The standard end-of-term seminar paper (25 pages max, exclusive of documentation). Suggested approaches: 1) a critique or extension of some theoretical framework, 2) a contribution to the history of thinking on the public through the recovery of some neglected work, 3) adjudication of dissensus among theorists of the public (eg, Dewey and Lippman, Arendt and Habermas), 4) a case study applying or testing some theoretical position on the public	1	300	300
		Grand total	800

Course policies (ie, "the small print"):

Attendance is expected and recorded. Every effort will be made to ensure that class attendance is worthwhile and helpful in understanding readings and completing assignments. Class is considered the first source of help and clarification, and those choosing not to attend should not expect private tutorials outside of class. It is also the case that attendance is a major factor in the participation part of the grade. Though there are no penalties for absence per se, you cannot receive participation credit when you are not in class. Though I will try to adhere to the syllabus, failure to attend class is no excuse for missing assignment deadlines or for unawareness of changes.

Changes to the syllabus. No substantial change (eg, number of nature of assignments) to the syllabus will be made without prior announcement. In the case of minor date changes, the WebCT site is always the final authority. Some changes may need to be made in order to accommodate the schedules of our guests.

NEW GSU POLICY ON WITHDRAWALS - There is a new withdrawal policy for all undergraduates starting Fall 2006: All undergraduates are allowed to withdraw with a grade of "W" a maximum of six times in their entire careers at Georgia State. Students who exceed the limit will automatically receive a grade of "WF" which will count as an "F" for GPA calculations. Withdrawals taken before Fall 2006 will not count against the limit and neither will hardship withdrawals, withdrawals at other institutions or withdrawals after the midpoint. Withdrawals after the semester midpoint are automatically given a grade of "WF."

To avoid withdrawals, students are encouraged to attend class regularly and to complete every assignment on time. Students should seek out the instructor via e-mail or during office hours to discuss any problems with the course or to help identify resources on campus to help deal with any problems you may be having.

IMPLEMENTATION OF +/- GRADING SYSTEM (new GSU policy) – This course will use the new option of +/- grading. The UNIVERSITY policy on +/- grades is that a X- grade will NOT satisfy the requirement if a grade of X is required for a particular course.

Cheating/Plagiarism - discovery of any attempt to represent the work of others as your own will result in a zero on the assignment and a report to the Dean of Students. You should be familiar with GSU's "Policy on Academic Honesty" posted to our WebCT/Vista site.

Extraordinary conditions - If it is necessary that class be canceled due to weather, illness, or other conditions, I will make every attempt to post notice in every available outlet (via WEB-CT/Vista, on voice mail at 404/651-4873; on e-mail; on the classroom door or blackboard; on my office door) at the earliest possible time. If there is strong reason to believe that class will be canceled (eg, severe weather), you are encouraged to check these channels in advance.

Office hours - I am committed to keeping office hours as closely as possible. This time is specifically set aside for drop-in visits. Though I will certainly be working if there is no one there, you are not interrupting when you stop by or call. Some days and times of the semester may be busier than others. Please keep this in mind when planning assignments. I will try to accommodate everyone as best I can. There may be times when meetings or other exigencies prevent me from being in the office at scheduled times. Again, I will try to post notice via the available channels and make announcements in class when possible. Limited hours may be available by appointment, but there is no guarantee that hours outside of those scheduled can be tailored to everyone's convenience.

Electronic office hours- Each of you has been assigned an e-mail account by the university. These can be used from labs on campus or from home if you have a home computer, modem, and the proper software. Many questions can be handled via e-mail. Drafts of papers may be sent for comment (assignments may also be sent this way if you're unable to be in class) and detailed questions may be asked or answered. Allow 24 "business hours" for a response (may be longer on weekends, holidays, etc). (That is, don't wait until 3am on the morning the paper is due to post a question and expect an answer before class.) Voice mail can also be used in more limited ways for some issues.

E-mail – Like many of you, I get a huge amount of SPAM in my e-mail box everyday. I delete what I believe to be SPAM without opening it. Criteria I use for identifying SPAM include: 1) e-mail from an address I don't recognize; 2) e-mail with no subject line or with a suspicious, often generic subject line, eg, "Hello!" To give any e-mail to me the best possible chance of being read (I receive so much SPAM that, while I try to be very careful, some legitimate e-mail gets caught in the net and gets trashed accidentally.) take these steps: 1) use an e-mail address that makes it clear who the e-mail is coming from—your GSU address is always good; AND/OR 2) use a very clear, specific subject line, eg, "Hello from Your Name." or "Question RE SPCH 4450."

Computer problems – Back when automobiles were a 'new-fangled' invention and unreliable, back when the automobile-human interface hadn't been quite worked out, one may imagine that employers and others were relatively sympathetic to excuses based on car trouble. The same is true of computers. When they first arrived on the scene, before we had absorbed really how they worked, back when technology wasn't as reliable as it is today, "My disk got erased;" "My printer jammed up;" "My computer crashed and took my paper with it;" were all pretty good excuses. But personal computers have now been with us for more than 20 years, as long as some of you have been alive. Computer problems are no longer an acceptable excuse for late assignments. It's not that they don't still occur—automobile problems still occur—but there are relatively easy work-arounds that will help you avoid most problems. They include: 1)Always, always, always, back up your work. You should always have at least a second copy of the latest version of your work. 2) Remember the Peter Principle ("If something can go wrong, it will.") and count on it; allow time for things to go wrong.

Additional Assistance - In some cases, you may be in a situation where you need assistance from the writing lab, or counseling services, or other resources available on campus. Don't hesitate to ask for help locating resources, or check the directory for additional information.

Equal Treatment - In general, I make no opportunity available to anyone that I would not make available to everyone. This includes all kinds of special considerations like make-up work, reporting of grades outside of regular channels, etc. If I would be unable or unwilling to do it for the entire class, I cannot do it for you. On the positive side, no one is getting any chances that you are not.

Return of graded work - I make every effort to return work within a week after it has been handed in. Sometimes circumstances conspire to prevent this. In such cases, I will try to announce a new ETR (estimated time of return) and to make it as close to the one-week mark as possible. Work turned in at the end of the term is available for pickup for one year, after which time, it is disposed of. End of term work may be picked up during the following term's office hours. Check voice mail, e-mail, the department bulletin board, or my office door for current hours.

General Etiquette - Having spent a couple of decades casting aside manners as old-fashioned and irrelevant, we have begun to rediscover how thoroughly unpleasant (and sometimes even dangerous--witness the rise of the phenomenon of "road rage") life is without them. Businesses now spend large sums of money sending their executives to etiquette camps to learn things they should have learned growing up, and "Miss Manners" has become an important cultural guide. In this class, it is expected that certain basics will be adhered to: 1) Do not talk when others are talking; 2) If you're going to be in class, arrive on time and be prepared to stay for the duration (except in exceptional cases); 3) If the newspaper or other work is more important than class on a given day, please feel free to go to the local coffee shop. Your presence in class on such days does you no good and serves to distract others. In general do not act in ways that would be distracting to the business of the class.